



# THE KEYNOTER



Prosperity's Advance Agent

## WILLIAM McKINLEY

Part One ★ 1896

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## President's Message

It is with great pleasure that I announce the formal funding of the APIC Permanent Museum Internship Fund.

Thanks to a generous contribution by Joe Jacobs in memory of his son and our friend, Mark, we are on our way to making an idea into a reality. We have received a number of donations, due to the efforts of Chick Harris and others, which now puts the fund over 40% of the \$20,000 goal needed for the first internship.

Our first internship will be to provide the curator of the Political History Division of the Smithsonian Institution with an assistant each summer. With luck, we will be able to begin the program in the summer of 1985. The 1985 internship will be dedicated to the memory of Mark Jacobs. APIC's role in educating the younger generation in our political history is an important one and will be advanced through these internships. I use the plural of internship because it is my belief that we have a responsibility to provide other major museums dedicated to preserving political history with interns. Therefore, our goal should be \$100,000. The interest alone on that amount would allow us to sponsor four internships a summer, plus an educational project or two each year.

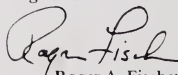
We are a mixed bag of collectors -- some for the chase, some for the pride of ownership, some for the future financial rewards, but most for the history and the pride of being preservers of America's political history. Although our reasons for collecting are diverse, our desire to educate the young is unanimous, and with this in mind, I am asking each member to contribute to the internship fund, may it be in cash or memorabilia. We need your active support to be successful.



Norman Loewenstern  
President

## Editor's Message

For many of our newer members, the 1984 Reagan-Mondale race is their first presidential contest as active collectors. The more ambitious and intelligent of them have already begun to lay the foundations of outstanding and low-cost collections through what I regard as the most rewarding aspect of our hobby, direct contemporary collecting. They have gone hunting at local party conventions and rallies and have scoured local campaign headquarters and have acquired, often for a dollar or less apiece or even free, large assortments of buttons and other items for their collections and future trades. Given the scattered nature of our collecting fraternity and the tendency of local party organizations to order custom-designed items in limited quantities, most enterprising collectors have found a few items that will be in demand in future years, enabling them to expand their collections into desired areas of specialization without spending a king's ransom. Along the way, many of these collectors have absorbed a vivid sense of the history behind these items at the conventions, rallies, and headquarters they have visited. This is collecting at its finest, an experience not shared by those among us who collect only at APIC meetings and by poring through auctions and sales lists. Enjoy!



Roger A. Fischer  
Manuscript Editor

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**Manuscript Editor**

Roger A. Fischer  
1930 Hartlev, Duluth, MN 55803

**Managing Editor**

Robert A. Fratkan

**Museum Associates**

Edith Mayo  
Edmund B. Sullivan

**Historian**

U. I. "Chick" Harris

**Locals Editor**

Preston Malcom

**Brummagem Editor**

Neal Machander

**Contributors**

Michael Kelly  
H. Joseph Levine  
John Pfeifer  
Robert Rouse

**Photography**

Bill Arps  
Robert Fratkan

**Support Services**

Vi Hayes

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**Illustrations:** The editors wish to thank Robert Blay, Ted Hake, Mike Kelly, H. Joseph Levine, Charles Lindquist, Norman Loewenstern, Neal Machander, John Pfeifer and the Smithsonian Institution for providing items and pictures for this issue.

**Covers:** *Front:* Cloth flag, red, white, blue; *Back:* Sales card for Gold Bugs, black and white.

APIC seeks to encourage and support the study and preservation of original materials issuing from and relating to political campaigns of the United States of America and to bring its members fuller appreciation and deeper understanding of the candidates and issues that form our political heritage.

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## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The Fall Keynoter will feature the 1900 campaign of William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt, and McKinley's death, including many previously unpictured items, and an article on Charles Lindbergh.

# Prosperity's Advance Agent

## Wm. McKinley and the Gold Standard

By Roger Fischer

Generally considered the most significant of American presidents to serve between Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt, William McKinley occupies a special place in the hearts of many political collectors, for the 1896 and 1900 campaigns he waged and won represented a golden age in campaign items. 1896 marked the introduction of celluloid buttons and studs, with several hundred varieties of each promoting McKinley and his adversary William Jennings Bryan. 1896 was also a spectacular year for political jewelry, with many ingenious mechanical lapel pins and dozens of different little "gold bugs" and "silver bugs" to signify one's monetary allegiance in the great "Battle of the Standards" between the gold standard and "free silver." Although such new types of items would eventually endanger the survival of many older types of campaign objects, such was not the case in 1896. It was an exceptional year for political ribbons, especially those printed for "sound money" demonstrations and pilgrimages to McKinley's front porch in Canton, Ohio. 1896 was also a rather good year for medalets and tokens, including many styles of the so-called "Bryan dollars" lampooning the Nebraskan for his stand on "16 to 1," and for textiles, glass and ceramic objects, and for such novelty items as umbrellas, canes, and little soap dolls that bore a macabre resemblance to dead babies in wooden coffins! The 1900 crop of campaign items was neither as large nor as eclectic as the 1896 harvest, but was truly remarkable in its own right, especially in terms of the size and aesthetics of many varieties of multicolored celluloid buttons.

In 1896 and again in 1900, McKinley campaign items were produced in much greater variety and volume than Bryan objects. In both races Mark Hanna was able to raise much more money than the Democrats could muster for Bryan (who was both loathed and feared by most wealthy eastern conservative Democrats), and much of the McKinley treasury was spent for buttons and other sorts of items. Moreover, individual Republican enthusiasts were wealthier than Bryanites on the whole, enabling them to purchase the more costly mementos not found in campaign headquarters. In 1900 Republicans were much more enthusiastic than Democrats, for victory was nearly inevitable, and much of this enthusiasm found expression in campaign trinkets. Thus McKinley probably inspired a larger and more diverse array of collectibles than any other American politician. For the most part, McKinley items have remained reasonably inexpensive compared to those of many other candidates from this period. Only the most impoverished hobbyist would be discouraged from putting together a modest McKinley collection. Because of the availability and desirability of his items, as well as his own significance as a candidate and statesman, William McKinley figures prominently in many of our collections.

Born into a poor but ambitious family in the hamlet of Niles, Ohio, on January 29, 1843, McKinley spent his first nine years in Niles before his father moved the family to Poland, near Youngstown, so that young Bill and his eight brothers and sisters could attend high school. An earnest if not brilliant

student, McKinley avoided sports at Poland Academy but excelled in debate. A very serious, devout youngster, he was "born again" during a revival at the age of ten, joined the Methodist Church at sixteen, and a few months later headed off to Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania to study for the ministry. A prolonged illness and family financial difficulties brought him back to Ohio to teach school and clerk in the local post office until his enlistment in the Union Army. A good soldier, McKinley saw action at Antietam, South Mountain, Winchester, and Cedar Creek, was commissioned a lieutenant after heroically braving enemy fire at Antietam (carrying hot food and coffee to front-line troops), and was breveted a major in 1865. Although his former commander Rutherford B. Hayes urged him to go into railroading after the war, McKinley took up the study of law to prepare him for a career in politics. In 1867 he was admitted to the Ohio bar, established a practice in Canton, and began to make his mark. In law as in his studies, he was more hard-working and methodical than brilliant, but he became well liked and appreciated in Canton. His law practice thrived and he was active in the local lodges of the Masons and Knights of Pythias, the YMCA, and the Methodist Church.

McKinley also lost no time in making a place for himself in the local Republican party. In 1868 he helped carry Stark County for Grant and a year later he was elected prosecuting attorney. Elected to Congress in 1876, he retained his seat in 1878 and 1880, when he was assigned to the powerful Ways and Means Committee. In 1882 the Democratic-controlled Ohio legislature gerrymandered his district; he survived by eight votes out of 33,000 cast, but the majority House Democrats seated his opponent instead. He regained the seat in 1884 and served until 1890, losing an 1889 contest for the House speakership to "Czar" Thomas B. Reed but securing the chairmanship of Ways and Means. In 1890 another legislative gerrymander and the unpopularity of his archprotectionist McKinley Tariff combined to



Large red/white/blue lithograph tab





cause his first actual defeat by the voters, but a year later he won the Ohio governorship. In 1892 he was named permanent chairman of the Republican national convention in Minneapolis and was widely considered a possible presidential nominee, but he shrewdly supported Benjamin Harrison for the dubious prize and, in the process, picked up some valuable IOU's for 1896. In 1893 he was re-elected to a second term as governor of Ohio, winning in a landslide of sufficient proportions to establish him as a prime contender for the presidency.

McKinley's political success was due to many factors, including a pleasant personality, a mastery of clichés, a good sense of timing, and a measure of good luck. But most of all, he was politically successful because he approached campaigning and public administration with a single-minded dedication, focusing every iota of his energies on his official duties like few men before or since (in recent times only Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon approached politics with such total single-mindedness). As historian Paul W. Glad wrote of him, "McKinley was not born under a lucky star. Endowed with modest talents, he made his way with diligent application and hard work." Another scholar described McKinley as a ".285 outfielder," explaining, "This may be damning with faint praise, but I don't know what else to say about .285 outfielders except that it is useful to have them in the lineup." The Republican party and, in many ways, the American people were the better for the decision of this political journeyman to devote his life to the public arena rather than the ministry or a career in railroading.

Like Lincoln before him, McKinley threw himself so completely into public service because his private life was singularly

bleak and incapable of generating much enjoyment or satisfaction. As a young lawyer in Canton, McKinley had married the pretty and spirited Ida Saxton, a daughter of a leading Canton banker and businessman. They quickly had a daughter, Kathleen, and Ida McKinley became pregnant again. But then her mother died, triggering in Mrs. McKinley a prolonged period of extreme grief that complicated her labor. The new baby lived only a few months and Ida never really recovered. Three years later little Katie died at the age of four. Ida suffered for the rest of her life from periodic convulsions and from crippling phlebitis that made her an invalid. McKinley nursed his wife with patience and tact, hoping until his assassination that she might recover. Much to his credit, he never sought sympathy and never played the role of the martyr, despite the advantages to be gained in this very sentimental period. But finding himself deprived of the traditional joys of marriage and fatherhood, he found fulfillment instead in the public arena. As Paul Glad has written, "Politics was not a game for McKinley; it was his life. Politics provided release from domestic care and anxiety and gave him a sense of fulfillment."

Denied a normal family, McKinley was sustained by a number of friends, one of them a truly remarkable figure who would play a role of herculean proportions in making him president. This was, of course, Marcus Alonzo Hanna, the most famous campaign manager in American history and more than any other single figure the architect of the modern presidential campaign. McKinley first attracted Hanna's attention when twenty-three laborers were tried for rioting in Canton in 1876, following a disturbance quelled by the state militia. Canton was so hostile to unions that it was difficult to find an attorney for the men. In the midst of his first race for Congress, McKinley courageously defended the men, won their acquittals, and refused to take payment for his labors. The incident made him a legend in the grimy mining and mill towns of eastern Ohio and won the respect of Mark Hanna, head of a mine owners' consortium but a fair man privately appalled by callous treatment of workers. The two men soon became fast friends and Hanna began devoting less time to business and more time to advancing McKinley's career. He masterminded the unsuccessful 1889 bid for the House speakership and the triumphant 1891 gubernatorial race, then set up an unofficial McKinley-for-president headquarters in Minneapolis during the 1892 Republican convention, adroitly keeping McKinley's name before the party power-brokers without stepping on any toes or making any enemies for 1896. After the re-election landslide in 1893, McKinley turned to the duties of office and Hanna turned to laying the foundations for the 1896 bid for the White House.

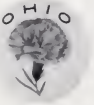
During the autumn of 1894 McKinley traveled extensively to denounce the evils of the Wilson-Gorman Tariff and promote Republican congressional and local candidates, winning in the process much credit for the GOP sweep and many chits to be called in two years later, as well as much public renown as "Prosperity's Advance Agent," a billing selected by Hanna. By then the Cleveland industrialist had quietly withdrawn from active involvement in his many business enterprises, had installed a direct telephone line to McKinley's home, and was busily working to put together an invincible machine for 1896. Realizing the critical importance of the Midwest, both in the

struggle for the nomination and in the general election, McKinley and Hanna established a national headquarters in Chicago and selected to run it a young businessman from Lincoln, Nebraska, Charles G. Dawes. Ironically, Dawes was a close personal friend and neighbor of William Jennings Bryan, selected more than a year later to oppose McKinley. While Dawes was beginning operations in Chicago during the early spring of 1895, Hanna went south to the resort town of Thomasville, Georgia to enjoy the balmy weather and to line up southern support for McKinley that later proved crucial to his nomination. The candidate came down in March for three weeks and helped convince the Dixie Republican leaders that the patronage they regarded as the mother's milk of the political process mandated a McKinley nomination.

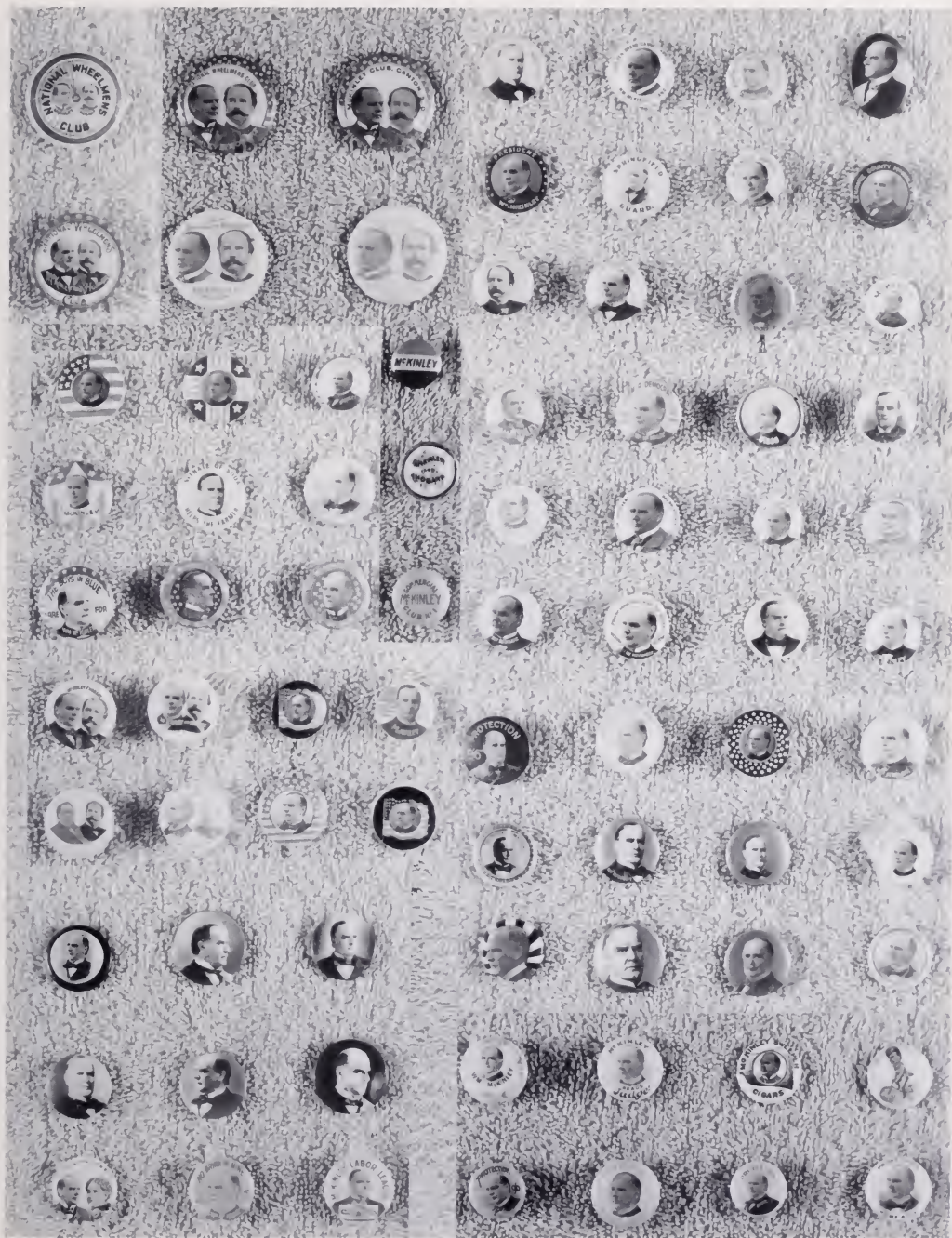
With strength in the South and a solid base in Ohio, Hanna began piecing together the rest of a convention majority. That autumn he conferred with party bosses Tom Platt of New York and Matt Quay of Pennsylvania, but the price for their support was too high (Platt, among other demands, wanted the Treasury Department for himself). "If I cannot be President without promising to make Tom Platt Secretary of the Treasury," McKinley reportedly told Hanna, "I will never be President." Quay and Platt developed a plan to deny McKinley the nomination through a host of favorite-son candidates, including

"Czar" Reed of Maine, Levi P. Morton of New York, Senator Shelby Cullom of Illinois, Senator William Boyd Allison of Iowa, and Quay himself. If Reed could attract sufficient support in the Northeast, Allison could do well in the Midwest, and the others could at least hold their own delegations, a deadlocked convention would allow the party bosses to choose a more pliable candidate.

Such a patently heavyhanded strategy actually worked to McKinley's benefit, for it created a "McKinley vs. the bosses" contest that played very well among the voters and the reform Republicans weary of the machinations of Quay, Platt, and their brethren. Forced to win the nomination without the support of the GOP bosses, McKinley was able to emerge as a nominee and then a president with no embarrassing IOUs to wrestle with after the election. Mark Hanna and his superb organization were not to be stopped by an eleventh-hour deal in a smoke-filled room. When McKinley won strong support in Vermont and New Hampshire, Tom Reed became no more than Maine's favorite son. With few defections, the southern delegations held firm for the Major. Iowa held for Allison, but in March of 1896 Ohio went unanimously for its native son and one by one the other critical midwestern states fell into line. On April 30 Shelby Cullom's Illinois resoundingly rejected him for McKinley and the contest was essentially over. St. Louis would be neither a







During the weeks that led up to St. Louis, the last element of suspense involved the monetary plank on which McKinley would run. A huge majority of Republican party leaders and convention delegates favored maintaining the gold standard and rejecting all compromise with the silverites. Since the Democrats were almost certain to nominate a devotee of "free silver" when they convened in Chicago in July, most Republicans were already looking upon 1896 as a death struggle between gold and silver. But McKinley was no hard and fast "goldbug." He had supported the Bland-Allison silver bill in 1877 and the successful effort to override Hayes' veto of the measure. As chairman of the GOP resolutions committee in 1888 he reported a plank stating that "the Republican party is in favor of the use of both gold and silver as money." In 1890 he gave strong support to the Sherman Silver Purchase Act. Privately, at least, there is no question that the man who would go down in history as the savior of the gold standard from the clutches of Bryan and his silverite hordes was something of a "straddle-bug" on the currency issue. In truth, however, McKinley did not care strongly about the issue at all. A

The major contours of the 1896 "Battle of the Standards" were determined neither by McKinley nor Hanna, but by the Democratic opposition. In Chicago the Democrats repudiated President Cleveland and his "goldbug" policies, enthusiastically endorsed the coining of unlimited quantities of silver at a ratio of 16-to-1, and after five ballots gave their nomination to Bryan, the young firebrand orator whose evangelical "Cross of Gold"



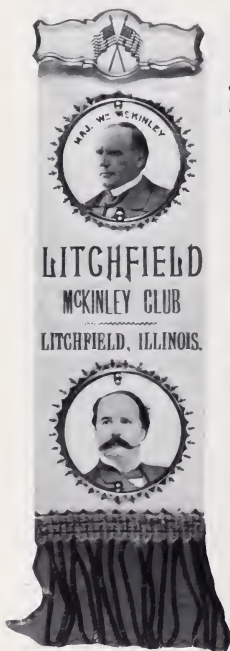
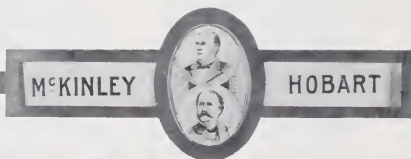
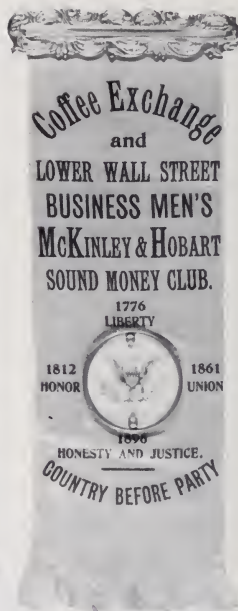
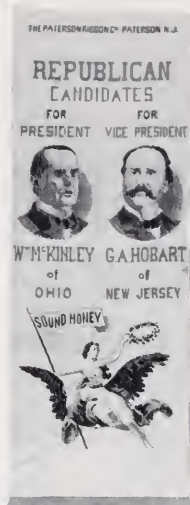
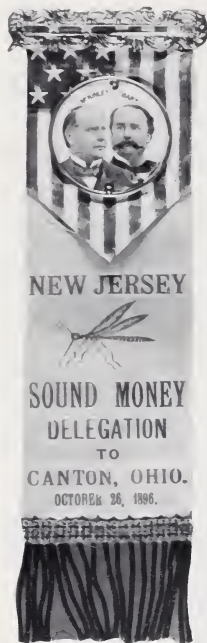


harangue had won so many hearts during the platform debate. In the months that followed, Bryan waged a campaign unlike any canvass ever witnessed by the American public. The Nebraskan and his faithful elevated silver into a religious crusade that pitted West and South against East, farmers and toilers against the moneyed minions of Wall Street. Pitifully short of campaign funds, he took his case straight to the people, traveling 18,000 miles into twenty-seven states to give six hundred speeches to nearly five million listeners. In the process he kindled an almost fanatical devotion in the minds and hearts of many followers. At the same time, however, he managed to scare even more Americans half to death. Businessmen, investors, and bankers looked upon Bryan as a wild-eyed, flannel-mouthed Bolshevik with a prairie twang. Millions of blue-collar industrial workers became convinced that "free silver" meant the loss of millions of jobs and a shot at the American Dream for them and their children. Immigrants dependent upon industrial jobs and raised to cherish both gold and the separation of church and state found a special menace in a man given to such statements (shouted in the tenor of the gospel tent) as: "You shall not crucify mankind upon a Cross of Gold!" When one added up all of these Americans who felt threatened by Bryan and his program, it constituted a solid majority in every state north of

the Ohio and east of the Mississippi, a substantial electoral majority.

The task that faced McKinley and Hanna was simple. Together they had to wage a careful campaign that solidified this support and avoided critical mistakes. So McKinley retired to his Canton home, where throughout the autumn he welcomed a steady procession of Republican delegations with remarks notable mainly for their enthusiasm for the tariff, bland fuzziness on "sound money" and the blessings it would bring, and an ability with clichés that has in all likelihood never been equaled before or since, even by Gary Hart. While McKinley was busy stringing together bromides on motherhood, apple pie, and prosperity, Hanna was masterminding a national campaign that revolutionized the art of running for the presidency. He raised nearly \$4,000,000 and saw to it that every penny was put to effective use. A speakers' bureau co-ordinated some 1400 GOP orators from the Chicago headquarters. At least 200,000,000 pieces of literature were mailed out to the faithful and the undecided. Among the 275 or more different pieces were some translated into German, French, Spanish, Italian, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and Hebrew, a sure indication of the weight Hanna and his subordinates gave to the ethnic enclaves of the cities, mill towns, and prairies of the Northeast and









Middle West. A special women's division operated out of Chicago, evidence that American women did not wait until 1920 to exert their influence on our political process.

Given the extraordinary enthusiasm generated by the "Battle of the Standards" and the dimensions of the campaign Hanna put together for McKinley, it was almost inevitable that the 1896 Republican campaign was remarkably prolific in the campaign items it inspired. Both in terms of variety and sheer volume, the effort to elect the Major and Garret Hobart has probably never been equalled in its material dimension, even by the Republican crusade to deny Franklin Roosevelt a third term in 1940. Included were McKinley-Hobart medallions, plates, tumblers, "sugars," "toby" mugs, trays, paperweights, canetops, hats, umbrellas, soap dolls, toy tops, flasks, lanterns, song sheets, many posters and banners, a number of bandannas and handkerchiefs, and a hundred or more different jewelry items. In our forthcoming volume on American political ribbons, Ed Sullivan and I have catalogued nearly two hundred different 1896 McKinley ribbon varieties and we ignored many different styles that simply read "SOUND MONEY" or "I WILL MARCH FOR SOUND MONEY" because the minute variations made differentiation virtually impossible. The number of known varieties of 1896 McKinley celluloid buttons and studs has been reliably estimated at four hundred, perhaps more. In short, promoting McKinley and Hobart in 1896 became a booming cottage industry that provided jobs for hundreds of needy workers then and has provided enjoyment for many collectors ever since.

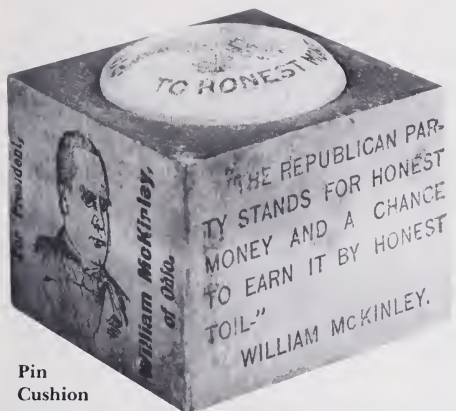
In sharp contrast to 1896 Bryan items, the vast majority of which reflected the Democratic-Populist mania for silver, fewer than half of the 1896 McKinley campaign items were issue-related. Those that were ideological reflect a much more diverse, much more subtle effort to win votes than do the shrill, single-issue Democratic objects. Surprisingly few McKinley buttons and other campaign pieces made direct appeals for the preservation of the gold standard. One button (also produced as a stud) featured a facsimile gold coin and the slogan "THE MONEY WE WANT." An outstanding caricature button depicted McKinley and Hobart bicycling to the White House over the promise "GOLD DIDN'T GET THERE JULY 7TH, BUT WATCH US TAKE IT THERE NOVEMBER 3RD." Other buttons read "I AM FOR GOLD" and "GRAND OLD PARTY, GOOD AS GOLD." gold nugget stick-pins bore the legend "GOLD BASIS," and glass tumblers read "GOLD STANDARD, NO SPLIT DOLLARS." Little "gold bugs" hatched out in even greater swarms than their silver cousins. Ribbons, buttons, and studs frequently utilized gold coloration, metal McKinley lapel pins were almost always gilded, and some of the more flamboyant ribbon badges featured gold metallic braiding, fringes, and tassels.

Far more McKinley items, however, reflect a shrewd campaign strategy of elevating the currency issue above mere metallurgy by endowing the gold standard with an ethical dimension. Buttons, a huge gilded shell badge, and ribbons urged "AN HONEST DOLLAR" or "HONEST MONEY." A marching banner was inscribed "HONEST MONEY AND NATIONAL INTEGRITY," accentuating even more boldly the innate nobility of McKinley's monetary philosophy. The great rallying cry for Republicans in 1896 was "sound money," a phrase that appeared literally hundreds of different items, many of them produced for the "sound money demonstrations" staged by "sound money clubs" created in many communities, trades, and industries to campaign on McKinley's behalf.

Many McKinley campaign items provide evidence that the







Pin  
Cushion

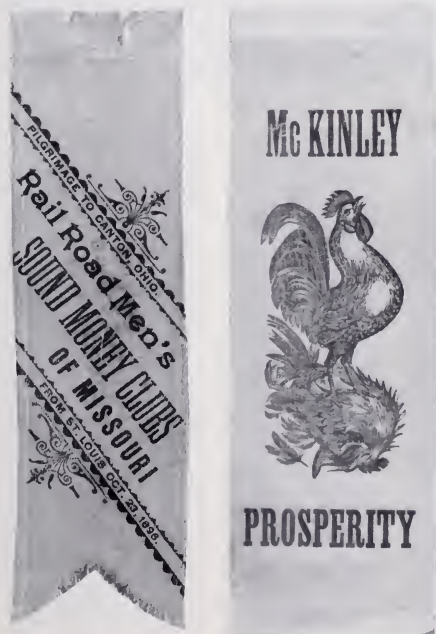
Republicans were able to do what Bryan's Democrats found either impossible or unpalatable in 1896, diversify their economic appeal beyond the debate over currency to encompass larger financial themes and priorities. Nearly as many items bore the slogan "PROTECTION" as the motto "SOUND MONEY," a good indication of the importance the 1896 Republicans placed on the tariff. This was especially true of McKinley himself, a longtime tariff enthusiast whose fealty to the gold standard was rather recent and somewhat suspect. Many other McKinley items were designed to more broadly stress good times

through economic expansion. Banners, broadsides, handkerchiefs, ribbons, Heisey glass "sugars," and many varieties of buttons and studs bore the motto "PROSPERITY." Ribbons and buttons alike proclaimed McKinley "PROSPERITY'S ADVANCE AGENT." The boxes containing McKinley soap dolls read "My Papa Will Vote for McKinley. GOLD STANDARD, PROTECTION, RECIPROCITY AND GOOD TIMES."

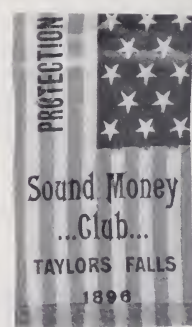
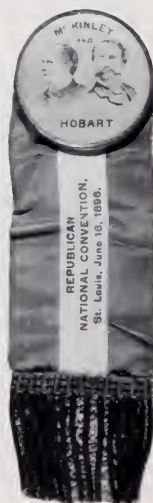
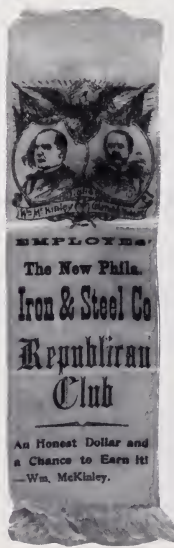
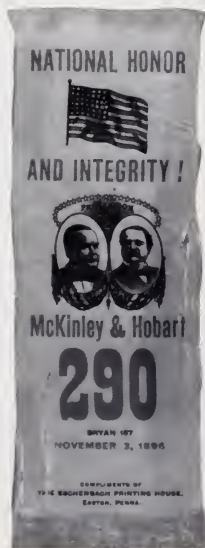
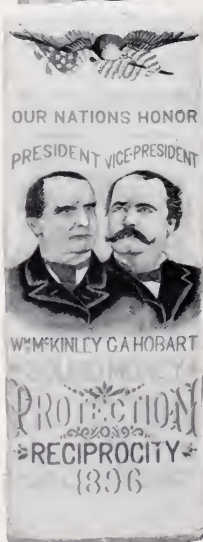
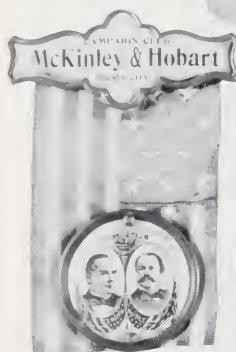
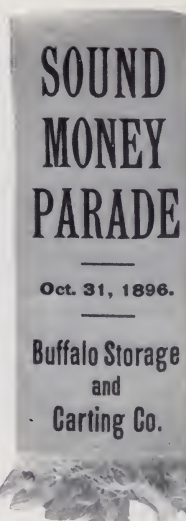
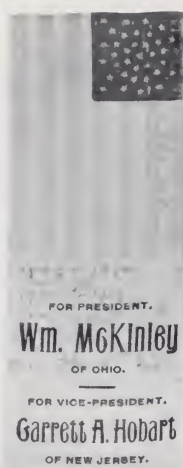
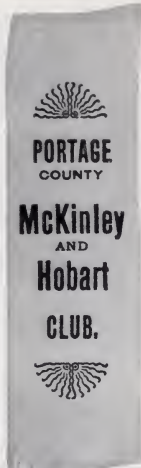
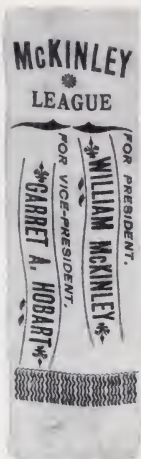
Scholars have argued that the most important single factor in McKinley's decisive victory over Bryan was his ability to outpoll the Nebraskan among blue-collar voters in eastern and mid-western industrial communities. Some campaign items provide evidence that this was no accident. While Bryan's campaign objects (with the exception of a "FREE COINAGE MEANS HIGHER WAGES" celluloid) failed to reflect themes important to industrial workers, many McKinley items bear witness to a vigorous effort to court their allegiance. Ribbons proclaimed McKinley's insistence upon "An Honest Dollar and a Chance to Earn it" and posters promised "Work for all and 100 cents on the Dollar." Other posters featured McKinley's dictum, "I believe it is a good deal better to open the mills of the United States to the labor of America than to open the mints of the United States to the silver of the World." Buttons echoed this sentiment with the legend "OPEN MILLS NOT MINTS" and others rhymed "It's MCKINLEY we trust, to keep our Machines free of Rust." Another button proclaimed McKinley "LEADER OF LABOR IN LIBERTY'S LAND" and a dinner-pail stud read "PROTECTION FILLS THE DINNER PAIL," an uncanny omen of cartoonist Grant Hamilton's essentially blue-collar symbol that would be used so effectively in McKinley's 1900 re-election effort.

1896 was an extraordinary year for Republican satiric items that poked fun at Bryan's monetary beliefs or his strange new style of campaigning for the presidency. Buttons lampooned 16-to-1 as "16 PARTS FOAM, 1 PART BEER" and taunted "In McKinley we trust, In Bryan we bust." Buttons reading "IN GOD WE TRUST, FOR THE OTHER 47 CENTS," some of the so-called "Bryan dollars," and satiric greenbacks lampooned the notion of a silver dollar worth only fifty three cents at current bullion values. Other "Bryan dollars" were pot metal pieces more than twice the size of an actual silver dollar (to show the size necessary for a dollar to contain its worth in bullion), while the most imaginative of the group featured "POP," a creature half goose and half donkey, symbolic of the Bryan coalition of Populists and Democrats. Bryan's unprecedented barnstorming and penchant for wild rhetoric inspired many buttons, studs, and lapel pins featuring skeletons, coffins, and cadavers, usually with such slogans as "TALKED TO DEATH" and "TOO MUCH POLITICS," although the epitaph "16 TO 1 TO DEATH" appeared on one imaginative pin consisting of a skeleton attached to a spring.

Although the first McKinley campaign represented something of a departure from the traditional Republican reliance upon the so-called "bloody shirt" reminders that during the Civil War the GOP had been the party of Union and patriotism and Democrats the party of rebellion and "copperhead" treason, many McKinley items provide evidence that this break with the past was far from complete. None of them blamed Bryan (barely a year old when the guns roared at Sumter) or his party for ancient crimes against the Union, but many of them were designed to portray McKinley as the candidate of national glory, patriotism, and the Union tradition of Lincoln and Grant. Several buttons and studs featured the familiar Grand Army of the Republic endorsement "THE BOYS IN BLUE ARE FOR WM. MCKINLEY." Buttons presenting him as "MAJ. Wm MCKINLEY" hung from ribbon replicas of Old Glory, re-









Fourteenth Ward  
**McKINLEY**  
**HOBART CLUB.**




PROTECTION  
AND  
SOUND MONEY.

**Commercial Travelers**

**McKINLEY**  
AND **HOBART CLUB.**

ROCHESTER, N. Y.  
1896.

**McKINLEY & HOBART**  
NOV. 24, 1896.



**FORTY ROUNDS**

VETERAN  
Republican Organization  
OF ORIDA COUNTY

**RUSSELL**  
AND  
**ERWIN**

**SOUND**  
**MONEY**  
**BRIGADE**

OCTOBER 6, 1896.






**HUNTINGDON CO.**  
PENNA.

**DELEGATION**  
**TO CANTON**

March 17, 1896.




**McKINLEY**  
AND  
**HOBART CLUB.**


**SOUND MONEY PARADE**

**FRANK LESLIE'S**  
**POPULAR MONTHLY.**

NEW YORK CITY.  
1896.



**BUTLER, IND.,**  
**McKINLEY**  
CLUB,  
EXCURSION,  
TO CANTON, O.,  
OCT. 29, '96.



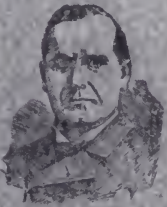
VOTE FOR THE  
CANDIDATE.



**JEWELER'S**  
**McKINLEY**  
AND  
**HOBART CLUB.**

Oct. 31, 1896

**SOUND**  
**MONEY**



Nov. 14,  
1896.




**GERMAN-AMERICAN**  
**McKINLEY CLUB**

Union Veterans'  
Patriotic League.



CLEVELAND, O.  
1896.

**DISEBER**  
**HAMPDEN**



**SOUND MONEY**  
AND  
**PROTECTION CLUB**

CANTON, OHIO, 1896.

**McKINLEY**  
CLUB



**KENT, OHIO.**  
1896.







mindings of his service in the Union Army ranks. An exceptionally large proportion of buttons and other items utilized the colors red, white and blue and flag designs. Efforts to link McKinley with Old Glory were apparently so successful that, according to biographer Margaret Leech, his national committee bought and gave out as McKinley campaign badges huge quantities of cloth flag stickpins designed originally as general patriotic items.

There is no way to estimate the influence of all of these campaign objects in forging a national mandate for McKinley, but they probably did help in a minor way to add to the color and excitement of one of the most dramatic elections ever held in the United States. 1896 was not merely a contest between two men and two monetary philosophies, it quickly developed into a struggle between the industrial East and Midwest against the rural South and West, between two very different styles of campaigning, and, in a sense, between our agrarian past and our industrial future. As historian R. Hal Williams has written, "fiercely fought and dramatically staged, the battle matched forces that drew on different traditions and pointed the nation to different futures. Unfolding, it gathered a charged excitement that sparked a lifetime's memories. Those who lived through it never forgot it." In the five critical midwestern states of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, where the presidency would be won or lost that year, interest was so intense that voter turnout exceeded ninety five percent! Nationwide, nearly fourteen million Americans went to the polls, an increase of almost two million over 1892.

McKinley's victory was decisive, if not overwhelming. The Major captured 7,104,779 popular votes to Bryan's 6,502,925, a 51%-46.7% margin. Minor party candidates John M. Palmer (Gold Democrat), Joshua Levering (Prohibition), Charles H. Matchett (Socialist-Labor), and Charles E. Bentley (Nationalist) together polled slightly more than 300,000 votes. McKinley's electoral vote margin over Bryan was somewhat more decisive, 271 to 176. As might have been predicted from the campaign, the key factor in the 1896 vote was geography. Bryan swept the silver mining states of the Rockies by massive margins, carried every one of the old Confederate states, won the wheat-producing states of Kansas, South Dakota, and his own Nebraska, and carried Washington and Missouri as well. McKinley squeaked to victory in California, Oregon, and North Dakota, carried by more substantial margins Maryland, West Virginia, Iowa, and Minnesota, and swept every single state north of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi to vindicate to the letter Hanna's geopolitical strategy. In this great bloc of states so rich in popular and electoral votes, McKinley ran well in virtually every sort of constituency, farm, small town, mill town, and big city alike. He ran especially well among industrial workers, including many ethnic groups that had traditionally voted Democratic, and in the old Yankee enclaves of New England, upstate New York, and the Great Lakes region. He carried New York and Pennsylvania by more than a quarter million votes apiece. His margin over Bryan in New England was better than two to one, led by an extraordinary 51,127-10,640 trouncing in the rock-ribbed Republican bastion of Vermont.

Although McKinley would move into the White House with only a partial mandate in terms of geography, his victory was the first since Grant's in 1872 to give an occupant of the Oval Office an honest mandate in terms of the popular and electoral vote totals. The man from Niles they called "Prosperity's Advance Agent" thus positioned himself to be the first really strong American president since Lincoln. What he would do with that mandate remained to be seen.★



# WOBBLY WILLIE

## *And the Carpetbag Candidate*

By John Pfeifer

The presidential campaigns of William McKinley continue to be one of the richest sources of political material culture available for study anywhere. Previously unknown and graphically aesthetic items still surface to tantalize the collector and inspire the historical archaeologist to uncover their unique political significance. One such discovery of an unusual McKinley delegate badge introduced me to Henry Clay Evans of Tennessee and his struggle to secure the Republican vice-presidential nomination in 1896.

Evans was born in Pennsylvania but moved to Chattanooga in 1864. From the beginning it was evident that he was not just another "Yankee" carpetbagger intent on profiting from the political upheaval in the South following the Civil War. By 1870 he had organized the Chattanooga Car Wheel Foundry Company, bringing many badly needed jobs to East Tennessee. He became a member of the first board of school commissioners, joined the Republican party, served four terms as alderman, two terms as mayor of Chattanooga, and one term in the U.S. House of Representatives. While in Congress he supported the Lodge Federal Elections Bill, which increased the powers of federal election supervisors to insure protection of the Negro vote in the South. Evans' stand on this so called "Force Bill" cost him re-election to the House in 1890 and weakened his appeal as a leading candidate for governor in 1894. As the nominating convention drew near, the Democratic press taunted him with such epithets as "Force Bill Evans" and dusted off the well-worn label of "Carpetbagger Candidate." Undaunted, Evans soon discovered a new political ally in a Chattanooga politico and would-be kingmaker named Newell Sanders. For several years Sanders had closely followed the skillful maneuvering of Mark Hanna on behalf of his protégé, William McKinley and fancied himself in much the same light. He saw in Evans a young man who had served honorably in the Union Army, chose to make his home in the South, earned distinction in the reorganized wing of the Republican party and, above all, had made few political enemies. Such is the stuff national candidates are made of and Sanders was convinced that he had such a man in Clay Evans. Through determined efforts at the county caucuses and a few hundred dollars well spent on convention expenses for undecided delegates, Sanders was successful in securing the nomination of Evans for governor and the stage was set for one of the most controversial elections in Tennessee history.

Democratic Governor H. L. Turney opened his campaign at Murfreesboro on September 13. Despite a recurring illness, the sixty-seven year old governor spoke briefly before lunch and resumed his position on the platform after only an hour's rest. As

a result he soon became exhausted and was forced to call on his brother to finish his speech. Democratic leaders now realized that Turney was too feeble to make the active and energetic campaign necessary to defeat Evans and it was left to spokesmen for the governor to carry his message throughout the state, with Turney's only other oratorical effort being an address in Chattanooga on Labor Day.

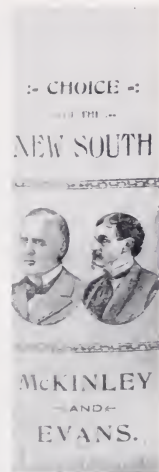
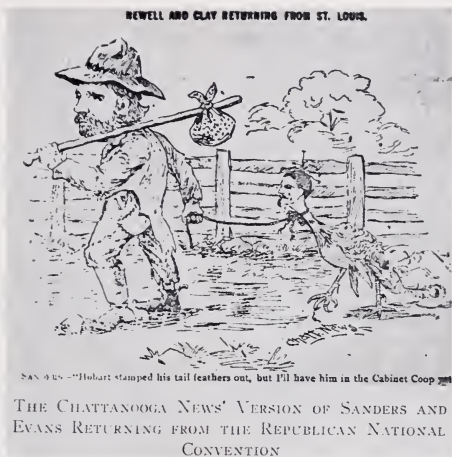
Evans, young and vigorous, opened his campaign at Huntington on September 5. From that day until his final address at Ashland City on November 5, the industrialist-politician eloquently talked his way across the state. He severely indicted President Cleveland for the manner in which he handled the recent gold crisis and accused Turney of not knowing how to run the affairs of state on "business principles."

Sanders carefully orchestrated Evans' appeal to the gold interests and his efforts were not lost on the Republican leadership around the country. In September it was announced that Governor McKinley of Ohio would travel to Tennessee and speak on behalf of Evans' candidacy. McKinley arrived in Chattanooga on October 20 and delivered an address praising Evans as the leader of the "New South." The political link to McKinley that Sanders had eagerly sought for his candidate was now established and images of a North-South alliance at the 1896 national convention began to take on a more substantive appearance. When the campaign closed at the Cheatham County seat on November 5, Republican chances for victory appeared the best in more than a decade. When the votes were finally counted, Henry Clay Evans had indeed out-pollled Governor Turney and prepared to assume the office of governor. While Republicans claimed victory, Democratic partisans contended that East Tennessee officials had permitted people to vote without poll tax receipts and that other examples of fraud could be proved in some of the counties where Evans had polled a majority. Two weeks later Turney issued notice that he would contest the election. The Democratic-dominated legislature assembled on January 5 and after hearing allegations of fraud from both sides, a select committee ruled that many violations had

indeed taken place in counties that Evans carried and declared that when the fraudulent votes were removed from Clay's column the official count gave Turney the victory by 2,000 votes! Consequently, Governor Turney was declared the winner and took the oath of office on May 8.

Although Evans lost the governorship, he emerged as a hero and a martyr to Republican leaders. Both Evans and his mentor Sanders grew in political stature because of the governor's contest, with national attention being focused on the political drama in which they played leading roles. As Evans' recognition





factor grew in all quarters of the country, his supporters in Tennessee began to think of him as vice-presidential timber and soon a movement for his nomination began to gain momentum in the South.

Sanders, young in politics as he was, had greatly solidified his position in the state during the 1894 campaign. As the national convention approached in 1896, he prepared for the first time to direct the Republican state organization in a national campaign. He conferred with McKinley in Canton and with Mark Hanna in Cleveland, promising them twenty of Tennessee's twenty-four votes for McKinley on the condition that the national leaders would not actively support another candidate before the convention opened. Confident of Hanna's support, Sanders left Cleveland to join the Tennessee delegates at the convention in St. Louis, where the official delegation was met by almost 300 Tennesseans who had come to work for the nomination of Evans for vice-president. Sanders took for granted that Evans would have the support of General Charles Grosvenor, leader of the delegation and congressional colleague of Evans. But at the convention Grosvenor told him plainly that because McKinley would be nominated from the West, the vice-presidential selection must come from the East. Undaunted by this setback or even the decided "coolness" emanating from Mark Hanna, the name of Henry Clay Evans was officially placed in nomination by Tennessean W. M. Randolph. He reminded the delegates that it had been more than thirty years since any citizen of the states organized as the Confederate states had been presented by either of the major parties for vice-president.

"Now is the time for the great Republican Party to make its first serious effort to put itself in a position of strength among the people of the South. The Solid South is reliably solid for the Democratic Party no longer! Tennessee, the gateway to the South; the great battlefield of the War; the state which voted against secession when the question was submitted to its people; the last State to join itself to the Confederate States; and the first State to return its loyalty to the Union, now presents one of its distinguished citizens for the nation's second highest office; our own Henry Clay Evans!" On the morning of the vice-presidential selection, Sanders and

Evans ate breakfast with several party leaders, including a man whom neither recognized and who was not introduced to them. Ironically, during the course of the meal Evans, Sanders and this man discussed every aspect of the convention, including the vice-presidential nomination. When the balloting began for the second spot on the ticket, it became obvious that Mark Hanna and the party bosses who had encouraged Sanders to push for an Evans candidacy were supporting Garret A. Hobart of New Jersey. When the smoke had cleared, Evans had finished second and later when Hobart appeared before the convention they saw that he was the man with whom they had discussed strategy at breakfast! As for the presidential nomination, Sanders had done even better than his word despite Hanna's deception, delivering twenty-two of Tennessee's votes for McKinley.

After Evans was defeated for the vice-presidential nomination, Sanders attempted to get him appointed to McKinley's cabinet and went to Cleveland again to talk with Hanna. He was met by an icy coldness that culminated in an offer of Commissioner of Pensions for Evans, a post that was considered a political graveyard because it attracted so much unfavorable criticism. In that same year--1896--Sanders also lost the Chairmanship of the Tennessee State Committee. Though Evans again sought the governor's chair in 1906 and Sanders was appointed U.S. Senator in 1912 to complete the unexpired term of Robert L. Taylor, neither ever again played a prominent role in the national political scene and like so many other also-rans, both quietly passed from view, leaving only a few scattered artifacts as a reminder of their "hour upon the stage."★



# The Birth of Presidential Campaign Buttons

## A Contemporary British Perspective

Published in *The Strand Magazine* (London) during the 1896 presidential race between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan, this article by correspondent George Dollar acquainted British readers with the new celluloid campaign buttons and provides us with a rare first-hand account of the excitement and curiosity the first pinbacks inspired. The *Keynoter* thanks Ted Hake for discovering this article and for sending it to us.

# CAMPAIGN BUTTONS

By George Dollar

CONTESTS for the Presidency of the United States — in American parlance, "Presidential campaigns" — take place every four years. They begin in June or July, when the different parties meet in convention to "nominate" or choose their candidates, and end at an early date in November, when the election is held. The campaign is entered into with great enthusiasm by the people. The Press pays little attention to any topic except the issue of the day, and partisan papers are filled with accounts of the merits of their own candidate and the demerits of all others. Citizens march thousands strong in torchlight processions to the music of countless brass bands; gay banners, with portraits of the candidates and the catchwords of the campaign, are hung across the principal streets; and "campaign buttons" adorn the lapels of voters all over the land.

These buttons are circular bits of ornamented or cloth-covered tin. Sometimes they are embellished with the portraits of the candidates, as in the button at the right, which represents Governor William McKinley, of Ohio, the candidate of the Republican party; or in the button at the beginning of this article, which shows the clean-cut features of William J. Bryan, the Nebraskan orator, who has sprung from obscurity to fame, as the nominee of the Democratic party. Sometimes, as in 1888, when election buttons first caught the popular fancy, a button simply shows the name of the candidate, printed in plain lettering, on a pretty background of stars and stripes. At other times, it shows the issue between the parties. In the elections of four and eight years ago, for instance, when the parties were divided on the tariff question, many of the buttons had "Free Trade" or "Protection" printed on the surface. This year the parties are in bitter controversy over the currency question, and several of the buttons reproduced in this article give evidence that this question, at the moment of writing, is absorbing the attention of the United States, to the exclusion of all other issues.

The so-called "silver-bug button," reproduced at the left, will serve as a hook upon which to hang a brief exposition of the abstruse question which has stirred the Americans to fever-heat. The noticeable thing about this button is not the bug itself, but the lettering on its spacious back. It is a Demo-

cratic button, for the words "Free unlimited" represent what the Democrats are fighting for in this campaign, namely, the coinage by the United States mints of all silver offered, free of charge to the owners of the bullion, into legal tender money. The "16 to 1" expresses the Democratic desire that the ratio between silver and gold should be legally maintained by the Government in the proportion of sixteen grains of silver to one grain of gold; or, in other words, that sixteen ounces of silver should always be equivalent in value to one ounce of gold. The designer of this button has tried to express the troublesome point in a graphic manner, by silvering the entire bug, with the exception of the small patch upon which the figure 1 stands, shown in our reproduction. This patch, in the original, is done in gilt, and probably if one had the time to measure the relative quantities of silver and gilt shown on the surface, including the feelers and the legs, one would find sixteen parts of silver to one of gilt. It may be remarked that, in the United States, the word "bug" is used in a general way to express any insect, and conveys no special meaning, as it does in England. Its use in the catchwords "silver-bug" and "gold-bug" may be taken as an evidence that Americans have not yet forgotten Edgar Allan Poe, from whose famous story, "The Gold-Bug," the current expression is probably derived.

The "silver-bug" also figures in a less attractive button, which, besides the inevitable "16 to 1," contains the words "No Compromise." Here is one just below. "No Compromise" expresses the determination of the "silverites," or Democrats, to resist to the last any attempt to make the ratio between silver and gold anything but sixteen to one. It can easily be seen that the use of these expressions on campaign buttons forms an appreciable factor in the education of the people to an understanding of the intricate points of the currency question. For no American in his right senses would go about with a button unless he could explain what it meant.

The Republican, of course, hoots at the "silver-bug" button, and refuses to wear it. To him the idea of a constant ratio between silver and gold is mere poppycock. It is his belief that the quantity of silver in the world is constantly fluctuating, and that the total amount of gold is nearly always the same. That is to say, the Republican party believes in a "sound money," which does not depreciate in value, and does not believe in an "unsound money," which tends to depreciate in value, the more





the metal of which it is made is produced. Consequently the Republican wears upon his jacket a "sound money button," like that at the right. This button, with its bug and lettering in beautiful gilt on a blue background, is a deadly enemy to the pretensions of the "free coinage fiends," who, so the Republicans say, want to make the Government purchase silver at a price far beyond its value. It is, perhaps, not so striking as the two preceding buttons, because there is not so much on it. But the Republicans say there's a lot in it.



Sometimes on the buttons there is a sparkle of fun. Take, for example, this "G.O.P." button at the left. The "G.O.P." stands for "Grand Old Party," and is a term applied to the Republican party, which for many years after the Civil War remained in power undefeated. The words "good as gold" may be taken in a double sense, though what the elephant represents no one except the designer can tell. Someone has suggested that the life of an elephant is long, and that the button prophesies an equally long existence for the "Grand Old Party." Possibly this is the correct explanation. At all events, it is a striking button.



Naturally, the buttons showing the physiognomies of the different candidates are the most popular, and hence the most widely worn. If you wear a "McKinley button" or a "Bryan button," your friends know at once who your candidate is, and there is no unnecessary quizzing as to your stand upon the money question. But if you wear a "sound money button," it is a toss-up whether you are going to vote for McKinley or for the candidate of the "gold Democrats." It may be said, in passing, that since the nomination of Bryan, the "silverite," by the Democratic party, a large number of Democrats, who are opposed to the theories of the "silverites," have broken away from their party and have nominated candidates of their own. Hence they are called "gold Democrats," and the "sound-money button" is as much a favourite with them as with the Republicans. But the portrait buttons are the most effective. Here is one, at the right, which does a double duty in expressing your own preferences and asking a question at one and the same time. The portrait of McKinley is very good.



The use of a flag for a background, although not at all a new idea, is always popular. Knowing this, the manufacturers, in order to meet the demand of all parties, prepare large quantities of flag buttons, showing the different candidates, usually on the same background. In the accompanying portrait button of Joshua Levering, who has been nominated by the Prohibition, or "no liquor," party, the flag is the same as that used in the McKinley button reproduced in the second paragraph of this article. This Levering button illustrates a peculiarly disagreeable detail in flag buttons. The hasty manufacture of buttons allows little time to be spent in perfecting the details, and the chances of getting the portrait exactly in the middle of the flag, or the flag exactly round the portrait, are few and far between. When not properly in the centre, the portrait looks odd, and the whole button shows slovenly manufacture. When buttons are bought by the dozens and hundreds, as they often are by dealers in knick-knacks, there is nothing more annoying than to find imperfect ones in the lot. No dealer can sell them when perfect ones are to be obtained, and loss naturally results.



The question of loss to the manufacturer is interesting. It is very evident that the life of a campaign button is a few months at the most, and once an election is settled, the buttons are forgotten. The manufacturers, therefore, are very careful not to make too large a quantity, for fear that, at the end of the campaign, they will have a lot of useless stock upon their hands. As it is, they usually find that they have an overstock. People will have the best buttons; and if a rival firm gets out a unique and taking sample, that button is bought, almost to the extinction of others. In the last campaign one Eastern firm, which had prepared a large quantity of buttons, suddenly found itself outstripped by a smarter firm with prettier designs. The result was that, at the end of the campaign, about ten thousand buttons were tossed into the ash-heap.

Sometimes, for several reasons, a button does not "catch on," and this fact means more loss. The "Free Cuba" button is one of the daintiest of the lot. It was evidently designed in the expectation that the attitude of the United States towards the Cuban insurgents would be one of the chief issues of the campaign. The parties, however, have had no time to woo the Cuban goddess, and it is said by one dealer that the "Cuba Libre" cry has fallen flat, so far as the sale of the buttons is concerned.



It is amazing, too, how cheap campaign buttons are in the closing days of a Presidential fight. The ordinary or popular price for a button is five cents, or 2½d., although some of the more elaborate designs cost five-pence. In large quantities, good discounts are made to dealers. But just before election, the price suddenly drops, and good buttons can be bought for almost nothing. This sudden fall in price is due to an overstock in the market, and a desire on the part of the manufacturers to realize their money before it is too late. Even then, the manufacturers make money, for, in large quantities, campaign buttons may be manufactured for a fraction of a halfpenny apiece.

In the present campaign, the Democratic buttons, showing the portraits of the Democratic candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, Bryan and Sewall, have sold very widely, especially in the west. The demand is due to a general desire to see "what Bryan looks like." The nomination of "the young orator of the Platte," after a stirring speech in the convention, surprised the country, and the button manufacturers found no small difficulty in getting photographs of Bryan to put upon their buttons. But when the buttons came out, they were readily bought. The clean-shaven, good-natured face attracted everybody. The reproductions, moreover, were very successful, and the dark face on the white background, as in the accompanying picture, made a pretty contrast. The same photograph has also been reproduced upon the Stars and Stripes background; but, as in the case of the Levering button, the effect is ragged. A smaller Bryan button has also been popular, with the simple inscription "For President Wm. J. Bryan" over the head.



There are also buttons showing the candidates of each party for President and Vice-President looking at each other. The candidates of each party for the two highest offices are called a "ticket," and in the present campaign there are several "tickets." The Republicans have nominated McKinley and Hobart—the latter a New Jersey man with money. The Democrats have nominated Bryan and Sewall. The "gold-Democratic ticket" is made up of two generals who fought against each other in the

Civil War—Palmer and Buckner. The "Populists" or "Popocrats" have nominated Bryan and Watson for their ticket. The Prohibition candidates are Levering and Johnson; and the Labour party have put forth a ticket too. But neither of these latter two parties is of much account in the present campaign.

With so many men to handle, it is no wonder that the number of different buttons this year is very great. It is a difficult problem, too, to get two photographs on the surface of a button without crowding. In the Harrison-Cleveland campaign of 1892, one of the Republican buttons represented Harrison and Reid nose to nose, so small was the surface of the button and so large the space swallowed up by Harrison's beard. But in the Bryan-Sewall button at the right of this column, much has been done in a little space, and the likenesses of the Democratic candidates are fairly distinct and true. The McKinley and Hobart button at the left is quite as successful, although the Stars and Stripes again partly spoil the total effect. The presence of McKinley and Hobart together must not, however, be taken as a proof that they sat together for their photograph. It



is said that the Republican candidate never saw his colleague until they met together at McKinley's home in Canton, Ohio, after the convention. In the button, however, they look as if they had been bosom friends for years.

A campaign in which two different Vice-Presidents are nominated by two different parties, with the same candidate for President, adds variety to campaign buttons. This year the silver Democrats nominated Bryan, a poor man, and Sewall, a rich man. The Populist party, which contains a goodly number of silverites, were willing to accept Bryan as their candidate for President, but they would

have none of Sewall and his wealth—the hatred of wealth being one of the idiosyncrasies which descend from Populist father to son. The present situation, which is unusual in American politics, has caused consternation among the silver Democrats, and no little inconvenience to the button manufacturers. The latter have been compelled to design a new button, representing Bryan shoulder to shoulder with Watson, the Populist candidate for Vice-President. On this button, Bryan wears a frown, as if he cared little for his associate, and wanted Sewall.

This is the shield pattern, which is very popular. The shield is an old-time design, and figured prominently in the campaign of eight years ago, when Harrison defeated Cleveland.

The "clock," here reproduced, is, without doubt, the cleverest of the year. The dial, hands, and numbering are of silver.



Nothing could be more striking than this design. It is profitable, too, for Republicans are buying it as a pretty curiosity, and Democrats wear it from conviction. It will doubtless be well to the front in the next campaign when the battle of silver and gold is fought again.\*



THE "FAVOURITE"



Paper Lapel Hanger



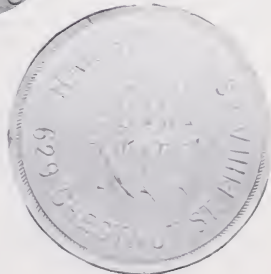
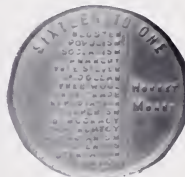
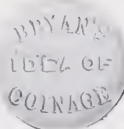
Ceramic Mug



Aluminum Lapel Shield



# ANTI-BRYAN "MONEY"





Cloth Sticker

# Eric Sebastian

## *The "Phantom" Candidate*

By Michael Kelly

"The door of the subterranean room burst open and Eric Sebastian, his Lestrangle-Haggard 451 levelled at the small group around the table, stepped inside. At that same moment the grating popped off the air vent and a smiling Adrian Tilt waved his submachine gun with casual nonchalance. 'Gentlemen,' said Sebastian, 'Your scheming is at an end.'"

That was how Eric Sebastian started, as the hero of a series of James Bond-like adventure stories I wrote while a student at Georgetown Prep, a Jesuit school a few miles outside of Washington, D.C. The series was very popular among my small circle of classmates and Eric Sebastian soon rose to mythical proportions as each story carried him and his companions to ever greater heights of daring and stylish living.

I suppose it was fairly natural that we would decide to run him for president. The surprising thing was that he would turn out to be so successful.

The sad truth is that there is no Eric Sebastian, no Adrian Tilt and no National Hamiltonian party. The entire business is a product of schoolboy imagination.

Eric Sebastian entered the presidential race on July 4, 1966, founding the NHP by means of a press release run off on the school ditto machine when the Jesuits weren't looking. Much to our adolescent delight, the release was picked up by the stately *Washington Post*. In keeping with his background (Sebastian was an English nobleman in the stories, so we transposed him to an upper-class Manhattanite for the campaign and later gave him an estate in Michigan), he ran as the candidate of a reincarnation of the original Federalist party on a platform that called for restriction of voting rights, return to indirect election of U.S. senators, and selection of the president by unpledged, independent electors (all as envisioned by the authors of the Constitution). The National Hamiltonian party took its name from Alexander Hamilton, whose remark, "Your people, sir, are a great beast" became the party slogan.

Soon the letters-to-the-editor columns of the Washington papers were filled with angry denunciations of the new party and equally enthusiastic support (all authored by my friends and me and usually signed with the names of various teachers and priests from our school). As our success grew headier we began appearing on local radio shows, posing as "Students for Sebastian." In the summer of 1966 we issued the only four NHP items ever produced: a small button, a cloth patch, a bumper sticker and a printed dayglo footprint reading, "Put your best foot forward - Elect Eric Sebastian President in 1968."

One of our group, Grover J. Rees III (known as "Rocky" around school), noted that when the Maryland state legislature



Sidewalk Sticker

established a constitutional convention, it had failed to designate an age limit for delegates. So, with appropriate press releases, Rees became the first candidate in the state to announce for delegate and said that he was running as a Hamiltonian. After a good deal of press coverage about this new candidate, a TV newsmen discovered that he was only 14 and then discovered that it was legal! Rees wound up on TV and testifying before a committee of the state legislature called hurriedly back into session to add an age limit.

The peak of the Hamiltonian campaign had to be when Walter Cronkite mentioned it over the CBS network news in a story about minor parties. Other high points include rallies at Northwestern University and Notre Dame.

Naturally, as a collector I was concerned when I found out that fellow collectors were being fooled as well. I wasn't really aware of this until in 1968 *The Political Collector* published an article about the NHP and treated it as a legitimate party. By this time the NHP had been exposed as a hoax in several papers and I had assumed that it was known to be a fake. Luckily, in the next issue Ted Watts, a longtime APIC member whose work on many of the club's historical projects has been of great benefit to our hobby and whose home hosted many of the Washington area APIC meetings in the early days, wrote an article explaining that it was a hoax.



### The Detroit Free Press

## Why Choose Jefferson?

WHY MUST ALL papers choose Thomas Jefferson as the man to praise on our annual celebration of Independence Day?

Why not the true founders of our nation George Washington John Jay and, most of all, Alexander Hamilton?

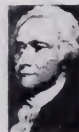
Granted that Jefferson was a "statesman, lawyer and philosopher" but what good would



Washington



Jefferson



Hamilton

all the fine ideals and noble goals have been without the creative genius of our Federalist system as put forth by Alexander Hamilton? It was the basic governmental system that Hamilton and others created that made the possibility of a confederation more than just a dream.

ERIC SEBASTIAN  
National Hamiltonian Party

Faint

NATIONAL HAMILTONIAN  
PARTY



NATIONAL HAMILTONIAN  
PARTY

## We Can Wait No Longer! We Must Send Our Very Best To Washington

### SEBASTIAN for U.S. President, 1968

"We are now calling for a return to this form of government as set forth in the Constitution: Rule by the Aristocracy! We are now calling all American aristocrats to rally to the banner of Government by Those Who Are Fit To Govern..."  
- Eric Sebastian  
(from his Announcement Address July 6, 1968).

SUPPORT ERIC SEBASTIAN IN HIS CAMPAIGN FOR NOBILITY AND DIGNITY IN GOVERNMENT. JOIN THE NATIONAL HAMILTONIAN PARTY!

#### Enroll as Member

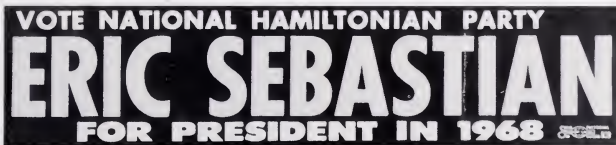
Mail this slip To: ☐ P  
To: The National Hamiltonian Party  
2736 Parkside Drive  
Plym, Michigan

Eric Sebastian For President  
National Hamiltonian Party

The amount that I will contribute \$  TO THE CAMPAIGN

Name:   
Address:   
Phone:

Bumper  
Sticker



Watts' letter set my mind to rest on the matter and I went about the business of college and the Army, letting my collecting slip into a fairly passive state for several years.

Years later my wife bought me the Hake books, which I enjoyed immensely until I turned to the third party section and found the Eric Sebastian button sitting there amidst the Debs, Thomas and LaFollette pins.

It struck me that I had better draw this to the attention of the APIC again.

There are many examples of hoaxes in political history. The Joe Smith nomination at the 1956 GOP convention was a hoax and I suspect that there was never a Yetta Bronstein in 1964, but

collectors have a right to know the real story. I have no doubt that there are collectors who will enjoy having a Sebastian button in the collection along with their "I Go Pogo" and Stanley Arnold buttons; however, any collector should know the true story. We printed up few items and passed them out on the streets and sent them to supporters, so some may be in circulation still. This may also explain why, when collectors wrote to the NHP asking for buttons, they only received press releases.

I don't think anyone who obtained an Eric Sebastian button should feel too foolish. If Walter Cronkite and CBS can be fooled, it can't be anything to be ashamed of. \*

## Items of Interest

Bob Blay, whose fine collection was featured in the Thomas Dewey *Keynoter*, has supplied us with a picture of the rarest Dewey-Warren jugate. This 3/4" beauty is red and white, with blue photo, and was made by Midwest Badge and Novelty Co. in Minneapolis.

Item Two is an enlargement of a 3/4" blue, grey and white button that recently appeared in the hobby. It is the only known campaign button that ties James Cox directly to the League of Nations issue. If one has been found, there must be another one out there somewhere.





# NEWS

## APIC INTERN PROGRAM FUNDING STARTS

See President's Message - on page 2

### Managing Editor's Message

Terrycloth? Yes, terrycloth. As you will notice in going through this issue, there are several pages of pictures taken with a terrycloth background. In the past, we have gone to substantial added expense to "window" each item so that only the items are printed. But the two McKinley issues are an experiment in printing the pictures as they are taken. In part, this is to keep down ever-increasing printing expenses, but also to enable us to use a number of photographs from our picture file.

Doing so presented a small problem, though not serious in our view. As we laid out the issue, it became obvious that there were a few pictures that appeared twice. In using multi-item pictures from several sources, this was unavoidable. There were also a few pictured items that were probably used in 1900 rather than 1896. In the second issue, there will probably be the same problems, though to a lesser extent.

We did make a serious effort to separate pictures of items from the two campaigns, but this is never exact, since 1896 photos were used on some 1900 items. In any event, thanks to the exceptional McKinley collection of APIC President Norman Loewenstern, from which most of these items came, the two McKinley issues represented a task almost as immense as the Franklin Roosevelt issue of last year. And like the FDR issue, for all the items that are pictured, there are many for which there will be just not enough space. We hope to have several features in the next year picturing some of the many unusual McKinley 3-D items, banners, flags, sheet music, and more.

Robert A. Fratkan  
Managing Editor

### APIC JOINS IN HOFSTRA SYMPOSIUM

In a move to expand the thrust of APIC's educational activities, this organization has agreed to provide exhibits, speakers and consultation to Hofstra University for its presidential conference series. The next meeting, devoted to studying the historical implications of the presidency of John F. Kennedy, will be held March 28-30, 1985. *Keynoter* Manuscript Editor Roger Fischer, 2nd Region Vice President Chris Hearn, and *Keynoter* Managing Editor Bob Fratkan have agreed to assist in this project.

In the past, two APIC members supplied displays for the conference as individuals. Edward Novik displayed his FDR collection in 1982 and Dr. John Pendergrass displayed his Eisenhower collection in 1984. Next year, for the first time, APIC itself will be an active participant. Materials for the exhibit will be drawn almost entirely from Chris Hearn's extensive collection.

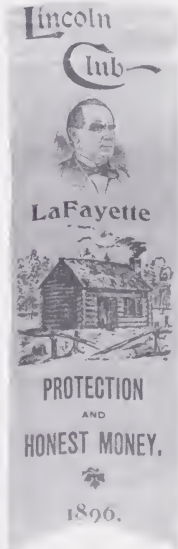
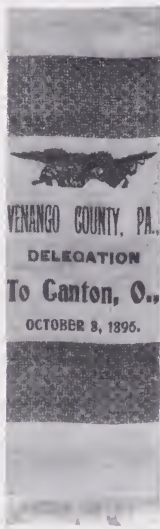
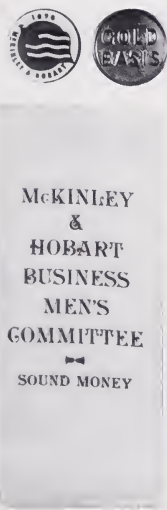
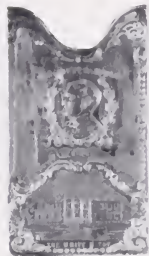
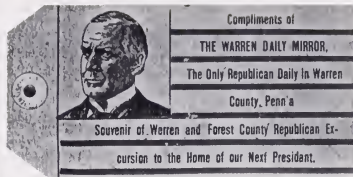
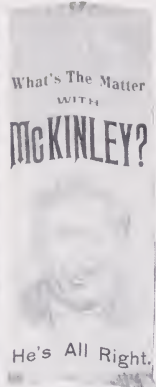
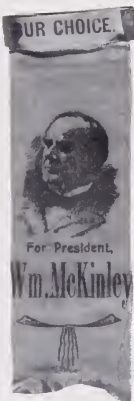
APIC members interested in attending the conference should contact Natalie Datlof, Conference Coordinator, University Center for Cultural Studies, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY 11550, for further information.★



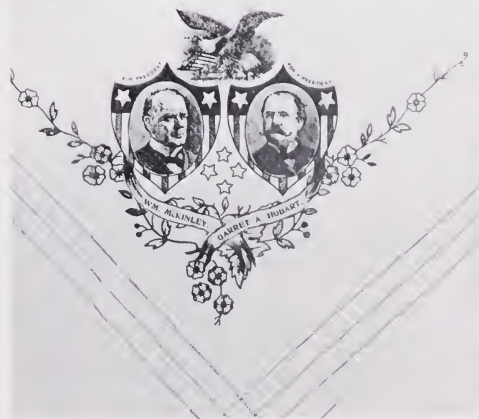
### POSTSCRIPT

These three scarce Stassen items were mentioned in the Stassen article (1984:1), but pictures were unavailable at press time. We continue to solicit pictures of major items not shown in articles, or for use in the "Items of Interest" section.



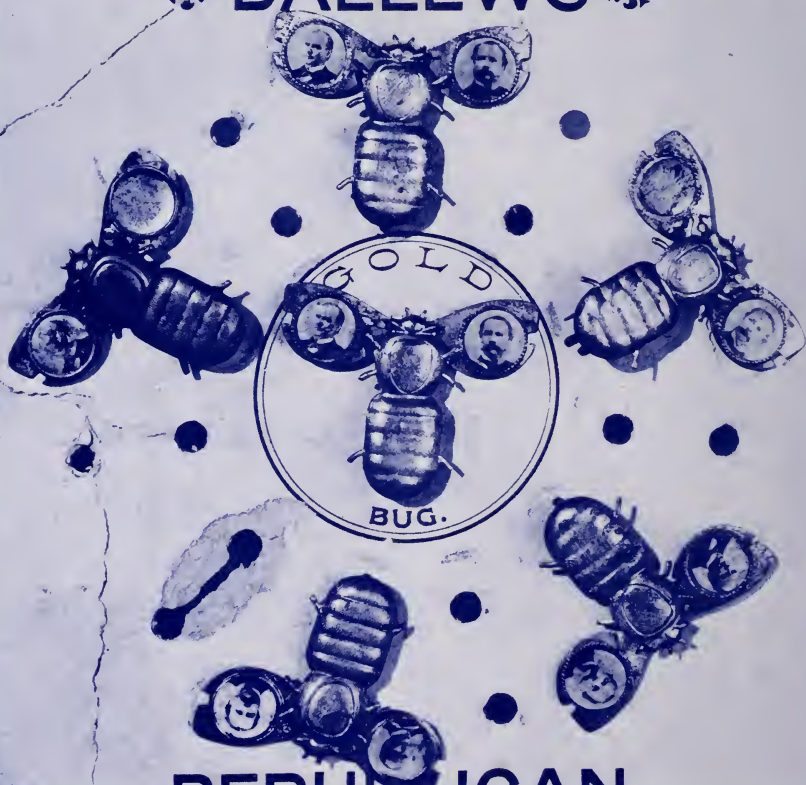


THE "SAFETY" IS THE ONLY RELIABLE MACHINE.



Handkerchief Detail

**BALLEWS**



**REPUBLICAN.**